The Christian Visitor.

Established 1848.

Wednesday, February 22nd 1882.

The Christian Visitro,

A Religious Family Newspaper

Price $2.00 per year,

Address 99 Germain St.
St. John, N. B

AN APPEAL FOR THE CANADA TEMPERANCE ACT.

The 23rd of this month is the day fixed upon which the sovereign people are to say whether in St. John City they will have this Act become law in our midst or not. This Act has been framed in the interests of temperance. Many of the oldest and most intelligent temperance advocates say it is a long step in advance of anything now possessed in the shape of temperance legislation. The fact that it will strike a serious blow at the liquor business if carried and enforced is abundantly shown by the attitude of the entire liquor fraternity now arrayed in hostility against it. It is also quite remarkable that so far as the christian ministry and the women of the city have taken a stand it has been almost, if not quite, unanimously in favor of the Act. The electors have now no other issue before them than this: Shall we have the Act which will strike a deadly blow against this body and soul destroying business, or shall we by not voting, or voting against the Act, give the liquor sellers still wider and longer license to go on doing their dark and deadly work.

The answer to two or three questions may help some to reach a proper decision; and urge them to make their conclusions felt.

1. *Is it right to use legal means to suppress the liquor traffic?* The business is now lawful it is said, but who made it so? The people they can take away the sanction of law if they see it for the best. The moral law, or teaching of God's Word, makes the traffic a most unholy one. Human law ought to make this appear also. The great function of human government is protection and the power to protect involves the power to prohibit. If the liquor traffic injures society, society has a right to put it under a ban. That the liquor business destroys men's bodies, minds and souls is conceeded without argument. Then the people ought to arise and banish the destroyer from the land. This is only what society does with other evils of lesser magnitude such as theft, arson, nuisance, gambling-hells, obscene pictures and literature.

> "Will ye the felon fox restrain
> And yet take off the tiger's chain."

Forgers, pickpockets, incendaries, mad-dogs are prevented from doing their dark deeds, but they have never afflicted society as intoxicating liquors have. The family and the church has lost little from these little foxes compared with the immense draft made upon them by the licensed ravages of rum and the ruin resulting therefrom. The sovereign people ought to take away any help they may have accorded the liquor business through a license law, and protect society by prohibiting the business. Their duty is to do this to the fullest extent of their ability. If we cannot get absolute prohibition we should take the nearest approach to it we can get and work till we can get a law that will have full and harmonious accord with God's law.

The Canada Temperance Act is doubtless not perfect, but that is no reason why we should not work with it till we can secure for it more stringent amendments. The principle that we are justified in doing nothing because we cannot do the *perfect* thing is no more correct in civil government than it is in religion.

2. *Can we have the support of law in suppressing the liquor traffic?* The Canada Temperance Act makes it possible for any city or county to secure legal help in rescuing the drunkard from his destroyer by a majority voting for it. This certainly is fair in a country where majorities rule in all matters outside of conscience and religion. If we are not numerically strong enough to secure the law we shall have to patiently wait in the employment of moral means till we are. On the other hand if we by neglect, or any false estimate of our duty, fail to deposit our votes in its favor we give the enemy loose reins to drive on the Juggernaut car destroying our fellow citizens for time and eternity.

3. *Who is to blame if the liquor traffic is not suppressed?* In a city such as this we do not hesitate to say that responsibility will largely rest at the door of the christian and temperance men. They are sufficiently strong to carry the Act and should be vigilant enough to enforce it. Responsibility only ceases where power to do is not possessed. The old moral and christian efforts are not to be relaxed but they are to be clinched with legal enactments as speedily as power to secure them is possessed. Any who give their influence to the liquor party are, however mistaken and blinded they may be, bearing a tremendous responsibility in continuing the terrible state of things which obtains in so many wretched homes through the demon of drunkenness.

In a moral issue such as the present it becomes every elector to consider, not simply in the light of this world, but also in that of the hereafter, what is duty and then fearlessly discharge it.

The temperance vote may fail, but we hope not, and even if it should it ought not to cause any one to falter in the doing of right. There can be no ultimate failure. Reforms have generally had a long struggle. Christ's kingdom is advancing and woe to the potsherd that striveth with his Maker. In the end righteousness and truth will prevail, and temperance is a part of that pyramid which beginning in faith is built up by God till it is crowned with love to God and our neighbor as ourself.

OUR ADVICE THEN IS VOTE FOR THE CANADA TEMPERANCE ACT NEXT T... AND MAN.

ONE of our Pastors says in a private letter this week, a number of appreciative things concerning the VISITOR, and adds: "For fresh ably written matter, the Visitor excells any religious paper in the Dominion." Thanks, Brother, now say that and commend the paper some Sunday from the pulpit and the result will be that many more will enjoy its visits. It is a perfectly legitimate and right thing for our pastors to speak to their people on Sunday of their religious paper and urge them to take it. The Pastor of the largest Baptist Church in New York we see does it, and he says he does it not for the Editor's sake but for the good of his congregation. Let all our Brethren do it.

Dr. Begg—a bright light in the Presbyterian church of Scotland, has the courage of his convictions in telling the faults of his church. He says in referring to certain sermons: "the Scotch Sermons"—that they are "heathen Sermons" that the worship of the church is being "thoroughly corrupted," that "there is an organized conspiracy to alter the worship of the Scottish Church" that "in many places they had full blown prelacy in the Scottish Church" and "that blasphemous stuff was once employed in a Church in Aberdeen." The rending of the Scotch Church from the State and the adoption of the principle of a converted Church membership through the medium of believers baptism would go far towards arresting the downward tendency in the Scottish Estabilishment.

The ambassadors from an African Chief to Queen Victoria on their return told Mtesa—their chief—among many other wonderful things, that they spent in the Zoological Gardens three days in looking at the lions, *two* at the leopards, *three* at the buffaloes, elephants for *many* days, Birds *six* days. The fact is that these sable ambassadors were at the Gardens only *two* or *three* hours.

Correspondence crowded out till next week.

RESTING IN MARK.

After years of wandering through the books of the Bible, much as an organized company of tourists do through the old world, the christian public has been invited to settle down for a year in the gospel of Mark, in the delightful work of International Bible study. No doubt it has already proved a refreshing change to multitudes of christian people, old and young, after the hurry and distraction of these past years. A tourist, after travelling with a company for a time over a prescribed course, becomes dissatisfied with the hurry and partial knowledge of rapid journeying, and rends himself away from his associates, that he may accomplish his purpose more naturely and satisfactorily. Many, no doubt, have felt in a similar way about the International series of Sabbath-school Lessons. To get through in a year, seems to have been a first consideration with those who arranged the lessons, the experience has been, hurry, hurry, rush and drive. The Rev. J. E. Vose, in the Jan. number of the *Education*, writes very sensibly on this most important subject. He admits that the system has some excellent features. System is better than unsystem. It has led to universal adoption. A great many helps to study have been produced, some of them good but many worthless. Combined efforts of teachers and others has been stimulated. An impetus has been given to the study of Biblical History, Geography and Antiquities.

For these and other reasons, the system is praised by this writer. Then follow its faults. A tendency to magnify the machinery of the work beyond the work itself. A text of Scripture is lost in a flood of leaflets, pictures, lesson monthlies, blackboard exercises, etc. Then comes a large amount of charlatanery. Hobbyists, and hobbies abound. The little plans are legion. Convention-work, methods, class-drills, blackboard illustrations, and machines of all conceivable sorts are derived, and applied to the study of God's Word. The helps contain more chaff than wheat. The teaching of the doctrines is likely to be overlooked. But more serious still is the charge that it is but a system in name. It lacks the essential of a system. The learner is taken from place to place, and is given a bit here and a bit there of God's word, but the tendency is to a confusion of knowledge rather than knowledge built up orderly. It would not do to apply such a system to the acquisition of history or philosophy or science in any department.

A new system is called for. After the infant Bible stories, let there be a few years on the life of Christ, as drawn from the four gospels. This is the heart, the foundation of Bible knowledge. Then may come the history—Acts and Old Testament History—for some years. Then may follow single books—gospels, epistles, etc.

CHEERFUL NON-GIVERS.

Mr. A. a prosperous man of business, listened to a statement of the work of a new Mission in a destitute neighborhood. "It is a good work," said he, "a very good work. I'll give five shillings to help it on." The next day Mr. A. went on a pleasure trip to a distant city, stopped at a first class hotel, and drove about to see various places of interest. The trip cost him £20.

Miss B. took out of her purse a shilling to help to buy some coal for a poor widow's family in a back street, but left in the other compartment of the purse a sovereign that was to be used for buying some trimmings for a new dress.

Mrs. C. was very much interested in paying off the Church debt. She finally concluded that she could afford to give £2. but finding that ring she was about to purchase was more expensive than she first thought changed her gift to the Church to £1. The other pound went to help to pay for the ring.

Mr. D told the committee who called upon him that he really could not give more than two shillings each week towards the pastor's salary. He thought £5. 5s. a year a very generous allowance for him, but he sent home the same day a few ornaments for which his wife was puzzled to find house-room. The ornaments cost £10.

The roof of the manse leaked badly and the minister reported that the health of his family was suffering from the damp, but the people were so slow in repairing it, that the winter was one of great discomfort and illness to the minister's family. During the winter he was invited to five parties given by members of the congregation, half the expense of which would have put the dilapidated manse in full repair. Ought there not to be a conscience in Christian giving?

LAST year the United States spent $2,000,000 for foreign books and $3,000,000 for foreign buttons. These taken with home-made buttons and books, ought to keep the people well supplied with these two articles.

The assassination of President Garfield has pressed upon the people of the United States the necessity of a reform in their civil service. The doctrine, that "to the victor belongs the spoils," has created a huge evil in the body politic. More than a large volume would be needed to point out the corruption and abuses, traceable, directly and indirectly to the spoils system. To sweep away the thousands of government servants at every change of administration gives facilities for dishonesty and mischief of a manifold character. When the President fell by the bullet of the murderer, and it was made to appear that the assassin was inspired by the resentment of a disappointed office seeker, then the nation awoke to the necessity of reform. The present agitation and discussion, contemplates the holding of office, during good behaviour, as is the case in this Dominion; but the law that is being shaped makes another provision, which, if it actually becomes law, will be a good example for this country to follow.

Entrance upon service, as proposed, by competetive examination, is certainly preferable to the patronage system now obtaining in Canada, and which is to a great extent abused. In the appointment of the principal officers, the government can know the ability and attainments of those elevated to office; but it is not possible for any government to have personal or satisfactory knowledge of the thousands of subordinates. This practically is left to the representatives of the respective counties. It is not necessary to go far to find crying abuses, growing out of this practice. Members of Parliament are overwhelmed with applications, and every influence is used to get scores of men appointed where there is but one vacancy. It does not always turn out that those best qualified to fill the positions get into them. Of late, there have been dismissals, made necessary from incapacity directly, but indirectly to the custom that exists in this Dominion. The time has come for change in our civil service. A plain, a practical way out of this evil would be the adoption of competitive examinations. Objections, now brought against this principle, in its application to the military service of Great Britain, where it now obtains, can not be brought against it in the civil service. In the military service it is said successful candidates may do the head work very well, but, as is too often the case, they have not the physical strength to make good soldiers. This would not hold in the civil service of the country. Clear heads, active brains, industrious hands, and honest faithful hearts are needed. Let us have a change.

SLAVERY has gone forever from the neighboring Republic, but the foul blot of polygamy—Mormonism—still exists. This is another subject that forces itself upon Congress. It is proposed to enact a law that will exterminate this nuisance. If a law for the destruction of Mormonism in the United States is right, is it not wrong that recruiting agents for this vile system should be permitted to carry on their work in other countries, and find no laws to arrest and imprison them for their work? Mormons have preached their doctrines in these Provinces with a view to obtain adherents to their system. As a matter of fact, if reports are correct, some of our countrymen are members of that foul society at Salt Lake City.

PERFECTION.

By divergency of views, the doctrine of perfection is kept on the "Boards" as a subject not only for practical ends, but also for settlement in the matter of judgment. The Perfectionists and the Higher Life people, are marshalled against those who deny the actual attainment here of absolute, sinless perfection. Does God require absolute perfection of the Christian? Is it his duty to live a perfectly sinless life?

The definition of terms is just as essential to the understanding of God's Word, as to the right apprehension of man's thoughts when committed to writing. It applies to the term now under consideration, which frequently occurs in both Testaments.

There is, first *absolute perfection*. The persons of the Trinity, are both the illustration and the source of perfection in this sense. All the inhabitants of the heavenly world, also bear this type of moral character.

It is this standard which is put before the Christian, in the word of God. Be ye holy, for I am holy. The infinitely holy one could put no deficient model before the children of men. Were He to do so, then He would sanction sin, just to the extent that the model lacked the absolute perfection of his own nature. Moreover man would, in the mingling of right and wrong in the standard before him, lose his ability to distinguish between good and evil. It would be making good evil, and evil good. Nothing lower then than the holiness of the divine being, can be put before the Christian, as the standard to be kept in view.

But beyond this, it is a standard that is attainable. If not attained in this life, it is the state and condition of all the inhabitants of the heavenly world.

But the Word of God unquestionably uses the term, perfection, in a sense, differing from that of the absolute. There is a *comparative perfection*, found in use in God's Word, just as there is a *comparative perfection*, found in use as applied to the things of every day life. The elements, the temperature, and the light, are so tempered and mingled on a certain occasion, that they give a perfect flower, plant or tree. Developement may be so symmetrical that there stands, physically, a perfect man. Now, in none of these cases is it understood that there is absolute, faultless perfection. Within the limits of the possible these might be a finer day than the perfect one; a more beautiful flower, plant or tree than the perfect one, a body so moulded as to be superior to the *perfect* body of the man; but among ordinary days, plants and men, the ones pointed out, are so distinguished that comparatively speaking, they are perfect; and so they are called perfect. So in the unfolding of Christian character, there are those so distinguished by symmetry of moral and religious mould, and vital godliness, as to be known among the great body of Christians as perfect. But as many as are perfect,—in a comparative sense, are to strive for the mark of high calling—this one thing they are to do, leaving the things that are behind, they are to reach forward to the things that are before. False apprehensions of this Scriptural doctrine, lead to painful results. Some weak, goody goody soul fancies that absolute perfection is attainable on earth. A consuming ambition to attain to it, takes possession of the heart and life. Devotion is fixed upon, as the means through which to reach the end. The sympathies are called into play. The hand is slackened in the matter of hard Christian labor—a very important element in a perfect Christian man—and emotion and devotion unite to take the lead for the attainment of absolute perfection. The senusous part of man comes under this training. The luxury of tears and meditation, are indulged in for a term. The worry and care of Christian labor, are thrown off. The poor soul is deluded into a belief that the change has culminated in perfection, and then follows the folly and pretense of sinless perfection attained. Hence the up turned eyes, assumed heavenly attitudes, sanctified tones and mannerisms!

But higher life people, and perfectionists, who put themselves forward as such, are not the people who lead in the rough, hard work of home and foreign missions. They are not the Pauline perfectionists.

All this apparently arises at first from a misconception of the term *perfect* as used in the word of God.

Brussels St.

On Tuesday evening of last week the Women's Missionary Aid Society held their annual meeting in the vestry of the church. There was a large attendance. The report showed that the Society was in a healthy state and doing a good work. Mrs. J. E. Hopper was elected President. Mrs. Wm. Allwood Secretary, and Miss Lizzie Estey Treasurer. A literary and musical programme was provided as follows:

ORGAN VOLUNTARY, Miss Alice Estey.
HISTORICAL ADDRESS, Rev. J. E. Hopper.
MUSIC SOLO, Miss Ella Clerk.
WELCOME ADDRESS, Walter Havelock Golding.
MILLENNIAL DAY, Harry M. Hopper.
MISSIONARY DIALOGUE.
Bertha Bell, Hattie N. Hopp, Zebedee Allwood, Ethel Estey, John Golding, George Hamlin, each in the costume of a heathen nation.
MUSIC SOLO, Miss Alice Estey.
LONE STAR, S. Jenny Hopper.
MUSIC SOLO, George Hamlin.
ADDRESS, J. A. Estey.
READING OF REPORT, Mrs. William Allwood.

Refreshments were then served and [illegible] were added to the funds of the Society as the result of the evenings entertainment.

The Temperance Campaign has been vigorously prosecuted by both the Scott Act and Anti-Scott Act parties. Mr. E. King Dodds has usued the usual amount of sophistry employed by speakers on that side of the question. Prof. Foster has done himself and the cause he advocates great credit by his lucid exposition of temperance principles and convincing arguments. His meetings have been held in churches, because the Anti-Act party secured all the large halls for every week night. On Sunday afternoon, a mass meeting in the Mechanics Institute, was addressed by Prof. Foster. We shall indulge in no predictions as to the result of the canvass. That will be known before our next issue, but we devoutly hope it may be a righteous decision.

THE Brussels St. Yonng People's Institute enjoyed a lecture last week by I. Allan Jack, Esq. on the political Destiny of Canada. J. A. Estey Esq. President, occupied the chair.

The church at Brockport, N. Y. have received an offer from John Deane, of New York, of an organ for their house of worship which will cost some $14,000. Mr. Deane was formerly a member of the Brockport church.

Smallpox was in China and Japan from time immorial. It reached Constantinople abou 569 A. D., England about the middle of the 13th century, Sweden 200 years later. During the 18th century 500,000 died with it annualy in Europe. In France the mortality was 80,000. Hence the proverb: "From love and smallpox few remain free." It appeared in America in 1528. This was in Mexico. The Indian tribes suffered fearfully from its ravage.

Previous to the introduction of vaccination it carried off 360,000 annually in the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland. Dr. Jenner after 30 years expiremeting had the satisfaction of seeing vaccination publicly recognised.